Introduction

This study guide takes a different approach from most study guides. It does not simply tell you more about the story and characters, which isn't actually that useful. Instead it attempts to show how the author's techniques and interests inform every single facet of this classic novel. Most study guides simply tell you what is going on, then tack on bits at the end which tell you how the author creates suspense and drama at certain points in the book, informing you a little about why the author might have done this.

This study guide starts with the how and the why, showing you right from the start how and why the author shaped the key elements of the book.
Understanding Contexts

In order to fully appreciate a text, you need to appreciate the contexts in which it was written – known as its contexts of writing – and the contexts in which you read the book, or the contexts of reading.

This is potentially a huge area to explore because ‘contexts’ essentially means the ‘worlds’ from which the book has arisen. For the best books, these are many and various. The most obvious starting point is the writer’s own life: it is worth thinking about how and why the events in a writer’s life might have influenced his or her fiction. However, you do have to be careful not to assume too much. For example, you must remember that although Dr Jekyll could have been based on somebody that Robert Louis Stevenson knew in his life, he is a character in his own right in the novel – a vital cog in the narrative wheel, a literary construct and not a real person!

As a result, it is particularly fruitful to explore other contexts of writing. We can look at the broader world from which Stevenson arose (Victorian society and the values that it promoted), and consider carefully how, in his writing, he both adopted and rejected the morals of his time. Other contexts might be the influence of the literary world that Stevenson inhabited (what other authors were writing at the time), how religion shaped his views, and so on.

Just as important as the contexts of writing are the contexts of reading: how we read the novel today. Most of us, before we read The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, will actually know the outcome of the story and many of the major incidents; this will have a profound effect on the way we read it, particularly if we have seen
one of the many film versions. The reader’s own personal context is very important too. If you have particular views about human nature you may find the novel even more interesting; if, for example, you feel that human beings have two sides to their nature – good and evil – you may feel more engaged with the novel. In order for you to fully consider the contexts of reading, rather than my telling you what to think, I have posed open-ended questions in the ‘Notes, Quotes and Discussion’ section.

**Contexts of Writing: Stevenson’s Life**

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in 1850, slap bang in the middle of the 19th century. He is a figure who straddles both the Victorian and the modern age: his writing appears Victorian on the surface, in its settings and characters, but dig deeper and you find a modern interest in the darker sides of the human mind.

Growing up in Edinburgh, the son of an engineer and a religious mother, he suffered numerous illnesses which were tended to by his fundamentalist Christian nurse, Alison Cunningham, or ‘Cummy’. Both his nurse and his parents instilled in him a strong sense of good and evil, dwelling at length upon the consequence of sin (which was to perish eternally in the flames of hell on Judgement Day). Cummy’s talk of hell gave the young Stevenson nightmares that were to plague him for the rest of his life. Most significantly, Stevenson saw humans as essentially ‘dualistic’ creatures – split personalities that were both good and evil in equal measure.

This dualism was reflected in the world in which Stevenson lived. Edinburgh had both an ‘Old Town’ and ‘New Town’ – districts which still exist today. Being from a rich family, Stevenson lived in the pleasant, wide streets of the New Town, but he was aware of the filthy, disgusting, over-crowded conditions of the Old Town of his day. As he grew older, he came to realise that the New Town derived its wealth in part from the labourers who lived in the Old Town. For all the New Towners’ revulsion at the dirt and filth of the Old Town, Stevenson perceived that the two worlds were reliant upon each other. Moreover, Edinburgh also had a dark past, which fascinated him. There were stories of William ‘Deacon’ Brodie who appeared to be an upright craftsman by day but was a criminal at night until he was hanged in 1788. As a teenager, Stevenson worked upon a script based on Brodie’s life. Stevenson also knew about Burke and Hare, who in the 1820s would murder people in order to supply Edinburgh Medical College with bodies for dissection. The respectable Dr Knox was their main customer.

Stevenson himself led something of a double life. While a student, studying engineering at Edinburgh University, he would spend a great deal of time in the dives of the Old Town, drinking and probably sleeping with prostitutes. He left Edinburgh in 1873 to travel abroad and begin his literary career. After suffering a physical collapse in November 1873, he was sent to the warmer climate of France to recover. He made many trips to the Forest of Fontainebleau, staying at Barbizon, Grez-sur-Loing and Nemours, visiting art galleries and joining artists’ communities. He also made the journeys described most famously in his travel book *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes*. Although his parents thought he was wasting his time, he was developing a powerful voice as a writer.

While in Grez he met and fell in love with an American woman called Fanny Osbourne, who was already married with two children. A year later, he met her again, spending much of his time with her and her children until she returned to the USA and began divorce proceedings in San Francisco. Desperate to see her again, and against the wishes of his friends and parents, Stevenson embarked upon the long journey to be reunited with her, sailing to New York and taking the train to California. After many adventures, including a total breakdown of his health, he
arrived in San Francisco, where he married Fanny. Later, the couple returned to Scotland and he wrote his first play, Deacon Brodie, in collaboration with W.E. Henley.

In 1882 Stevenson moved back to France where he continued writing, publishing Treasure Island a year later. However, with his health deteriorating he returned to England and settled in Bournemouth, which remained his home until 1887. There he embarked on the most productive and successful period of his literary career, writing and publishing A Child’s Garden of Verses, The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Kidnapped, despite being gravely ill.

After the death of his father, Thomas, in 1887 Stevenson set off to look for somewhere warmer to live, travelling to the South Seas where he chartered a yacht and spent three years sailing around the eastern and central Pacific with his family: his wife, his wife's son by her first marriage, and his mother. He visited the larger island groups, stopping off for extended stays in Hawaii, getting to know the local royalty, and railing against the stupidity and arrogance of the missionaries. In 1890 he settled with his family on one of the Samoan islands, where he became known as ‘Tusitala’, – Samoan for ‘story-writer’. Once again he came into conflict with the Europeans on the island, feeling that the colonists were running it in a corrupt and incompetent fashion. After suffering a period of depression he resumed writing, but died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1894, at the age of 44.

The story of how Stevenson created Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is now, like the creation of Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, the stuff of legend. Recalling the experience, his wife once recounted:

In the small hours of one morning, I was awakened by cries of horror from Louis. Thinking he had had a nightmare, I woke him. He said angrily, ‘Why did you wake me? I was dreaming a fine bogey tale.’ I had awakened him at the first transformation scene. He had had in his mind an idea of a double life story, but it was not the same as the dream. He asked me, as usual, to make no criticisms until the first draft was done... In this tale I felt and still feel he was hampered by his dream. The powder – which I thought might be changed – he couldn’t eliminate because he saw it so plainly in the dream. In the original story he had Jekyll had all through, and working for the Hyde change only for a disguise. I didn’t like the opening, which was confused – again the dream – and proposed that Hyde should run over the child, showing that he was an evil force without humanity. After quite a long interval his bell rang for me, and... I went upstairs. As I entered the door Louis pointed with a long dramatic finger (you know) to a pile of ashes on the hearth of the fireplace saying that I was right and there was the tale. I nearly fainted away with misery and horror when I saw all was gone. He was already hard at work at the new version which was finished in a few days more.

There is some debate as to exactly how the story was written; some critics believe that his wife played a pivotal role in shaping the story, but others disagree. We’ll never know for sure, but it seems clear that the drafting process was both intensive and furiously quick. Describing it, Stevenson’s stepson Lloyd Osbourne has been quoted as saying: ‘I don’t believe that there was ever such a literary feat before as the writing of Dr Jekyll. I remember the first reading as if it were yesterday. Louis came downstairs in a fever; read nearly half the book aloud; and then, while we were still gasping, he was away again, and busy writing. I doubt if the first draft took so long as three days.’

Having listened to his wife’s criticisms, and thought about the story further, Stevenson rewrote it in three to six days and yet again over a period of four to six weeks. In truth, although written quickly, the story was the product of a lifelong interest in dreams, the Gothic genre, and the fundamental duality of man.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde was more or less an immediate bestseller, with 40,000 copies being sold in six months. By 1901 it was estimated to have sold over 250,000 copies – a huge quantity for a book of that time – and it was generally received favourably by the
One reviewer, writing about the character Edward Hyde, was quick to perceive the originality of Stevenson’s narrative: ‘...with its unlikeness to its master, with its hideous caprices, and appalling vitality, and terrible power of growth and increase, is, to our thinking, a notion as novel as it is terrific. We would welcome a spectre, a ghoul, or even a vampire gladly, rather than meet Mr Edward Hyde.’

While we now live in a more open society, many powerful people could be described as ‘Jekyll and Hyde’ characters. Certain people in the media, politics and education may present a respectable facade in order to further their careers, while harbouring desires that they would prefer to keep secret. Perhaps the most spectacular example is Bill Clinton, whose term as US President was marred by what has come to be known as the ‘Monica Lewinsky’ scandal. Clinton had an affair with a young intern in the White House and attempted to cover it up: the ‘cover up’ nearly led to him being impeached for lying to the American people about the truth of the affair. Clearly, someone like Clinton would have benefitted greatly from a potion like Henry Jekyll’s!

Many critics have also begun to view Stevenson’s narrative as an allegory about addiction, central to which is Jekyll’s dependence on taking the potion and being transformed. Towards the end of the novel, it is clear that Jekyll can’t wean himself off the drug. As a result, like a junkie, his whole physical and mental condition deteriorates. The last section of the book could be regarded as a horrific description of the nightmare of addiction: ransacking the town for the drug, violent mood swings, his wish to hide away from everyone. In such a way, we could say that the novel has become more relevant than ever, because it tackles an issue which is a scourge in 21st-century society.
Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde has a complex structure because it has several different narrators. This is largely because Stevenson wishes to make the story a mystery, the central issue in the reader’s mind being: who is Edward Hyde and what is his connection to Henry Jekyll? In order to construct a mystery story, Stevenson could not have Jekyll narrating until the very end of the book when the mystery has been solved. In this sense the novel is a prototype detective novel. The lawyer Utterson plays the role of the detective, narrating, more or less continuously, the first three sections of the book. The fourth section is Lanyon’s narrative, which at the end reveals that Jekyll is Hyde; and then the final section is Jekyll’s story, which tells us, with the mystery solved, how he became Hyde.

As discussed earlier, the novel is structured around the theme of repression. The majority of the novel’s most striking images are connected in one form or another to the idea of repression. The locked doors and curved windows of Jekyll’s house form the imagery of a man locking away the truth that lurks inside; Jekyll turning into Hyde is a metaphor of what happens when the unconscious mind is revealed; the murder of Carew symbolises the repressed mind striking out at the conscious mind. The whole narrative is about unpeeling the layers that hide the repressed desires inside Jekyll.

We could break down the novel into the following structure:
OPENING (SECTION 1: THE STORY OF THE DOOR)

- This is Utterson's narrative, in which he tells us about his cousin witnessing a brutal assault upon an eight-year-old child.
- Suspecting that Jekyll is involved with this brutal character, Utterson spies upon Hyde and meets him. He suspects that Jekyll is being blackmailed by Hyde.
- We meet the slick, superficial Dr Lanyon and hear about Jekyll's strange experiments.

COMPLICATIONS (SECTION 2: THE CAREW MURDER CASE)

- London is shocked by the murder of Danvers Carew, a respectable MP. Hyde is suspected. His flat is raided but he is not found.
- When Utterson visits Jekyll, he finds him sick and depressed. He suspects that Jekyll has forged a letter to protect Hyde.

CRISIS (SECTION 3: THE REMARKABLE INCIDENT OF DR LANYON)

- Hyde has vanished. Jekyll once again joins society, socialising widely. For two months, Jekyll is once again the respectable man, but then returns to seclusion.
- The pompous Lanyon is also much changed, apparently mortally ill and wanting nothing to do with Jekyll.
- Lanyon dies. He has written a letter which is not to be opened until Jekyll dies or disappears.
- Jekyll continues to decline. A strange man is spotted in his house. At the request of Jekyll's servant, Poole, Utterson breaks into Jekyll's laboratory and finds Hyde lying dead, dwarfed by Jekyll's larger clothes.

CLIMAX (SECTION 4: DR LANYON'S NARRATIVE)

- Utterson reads Lanyon's account in which he learns that Lanyon was asked to find some powders for Jekyll.
- Hyde arrives at Lanyon's house, mixes a potion and becomes Jekyll before Lanyon's eyes.

RESOLUTION (SECTION 5: HENRY JEKKYL'S STATEMENT OF THE CASE)

- Jekyll tells his story, talking about his essential dual nature, his search for a potion which will enable him to become someone else, his transformation into Hyde.
- He explains how Hyde begins to take over. He can no longer control his transformations. Jekyll has become utterly corrupted.

The Influence of Genre – the Blending of the Gothic, Science Fiction and the Detective Genres

The most influential genre upon this work is the Gothic. Stevenson's descriptions of the smoggy London streets, his vivid imagery when describing the horrible Mr Hyde, the mysterious narrative with its kernel of horror at its heart – all are elements which you might find in a Gothic story. The Gothic emerged as a very popular form of entertainment in the 18th century, with writers such as Horace Walpole and Mrs Radcliffe writing novels about nasty aristocrats living in haunted castles and attempting to seduce innocent damsels in distress. The novels were extremely successful because they combined haunted settings with racy narratives that were about beautiful girls being pursued by unscrupulous men.

The Gothic influenced Mary Shelley when she wrote the first science fiction novel, *Frankenstein*, in 1818 and, in turn, the impact of *Frankenstein* cannot be underestimated in its influence upon Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. In many ways, Shelley set the template which all other science fiction narratives have imitated since: an obsessive scientist who pays the consequences for meddling with the structure of the human body and brain. Stevenson's novel contains a similar 'Promethean' figure to Mary Shelley's Victor Frankenstein. Henry Jekyll is like the Greek hero Prometheus who brought fire to mankind – he offers man the chance to become someone else entirely by using his potion. Like Victor Frankenstein, he creates a 'new being' in the form of Hyde.

Another Gothic influence was Edgar Allan Poe's story about a man who has a double called 'William Wilson'. There are also strong correlations to James Hogg's *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, which has overlapping third – and first – person narratives and a character who is motivated to murder by a strange, ghost-like demonic alter ego.
However, Stevenson’s novel takes the Gothic genre one stage further by being more ‘concentrated’ and, in some ways, more simple. Stevenson intensifies the horror by concentrating on Hyde and not introducing lots of peripheral characters. The novel is also more psychological than others of the genre, making it clear that it is Jekyll’s psychology which creates Hyde, and that Hyde is a manifestation of Jekyll’s character. And Stevenson takes the time to establish a memorable setting, evoking the foggy London streets, the locked doors, the mysterious laboratories in intense detail. He is a much more technically accomplished writer than Mary Shelley: he does not need to pile event upon event to create the horror in the book; he is able to build suspense by evoking character and setting.

Most significantly, Stevenson creates many of the trademarks of the science fiction and detective genres in this novel. His descriptions of the making of the potion and the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde are masterful set-pieces which have since been imitated so much that it is difficult now to appreciate the power they originally held. Likewise, the way in which Utterson uncovers the mystery has now become the template for most detective stories: his spying on his suspects, his investigations into the relevant documents, his interviews with various characters from different social settings – all are the stock-in-trade of the modern detective story.

Taking into account all these factors, we can see that The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is a brilliantly successful blend of genres: the Gothic, the science fiction and the detective.

Critical Perspectives

Is this Novel about the Unconscious?

Dreams played a central role in Stevenson’s construction of the story and form an important part of the narrative. His wife’s view that the dream constricted his creativity was not a view shared by Stevenson himself, who, in an interview, said:

At night I dreamed the story, not precisely as it is written, for of course there are always stupidities in dreams, but practically it came to me as a gift... Even when fast asleep I know that it is I who am inventing, and when I cry out it is with gratification to know that the story is so good... For instance, all I dreamed about Dr Jekyll was that one man was being pressed into a cabinet, when he swallowed a drug and changed into another being...

Here we can see how it was Stevenson’s ‘unconscious’ mind – the part of the mind that is expressed in dreams – which helped shape the narrative.

Stevenson was writing at a time when many philosophers and scientists were beginning to examine the role of dreams and the unconscious in influencing human behaviour. It was also a time when people’s interest in the ‘unconscious’ was growing. The French neurologist Charcot, who in 1885 gave a public display of hypnotism in Paris, used hypnosis to induce a state of hysteria in patients and studied the results. He was single-handedly responsible for changing the medical community’s perception of hypnosis: previously it had been thought of
as ‘mesmerism’, effectively no better than supernatural hokum. But Charcot showed how there were powerful ‘unconscious forces’ at work in shaping what people do, particularly in hystericis and neurotics.

Perhaps even more relevant to an understanding of *Jekyll and Hyde* is an appreciation of the work of Krafft-Ebing and Freud. While it is unlikely that Stevenson had heard of either man, there is no doubt that their ideas would have interested him. It’s clear that there was a ‘zeitgeist’ at this time: a coming together of ideas, art and science. Many of the top writers, thinkers and scientists were fascinated by the realm of the ‘unconscious’. Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis* was published in 1886, charting, for the first time, the different sorts of sexual desire – male and female, homosexual and heterosexual. While many of his views now would be regarded as offensive, at the time they were very progressive. Fundamentally, he began to uncover the role of sexuality in society, showing that these hidden desires are often battling with the conventional moral standards of the day. Thus, like Stevenson, he suggests that man is a ‘dualistic’ creature, appearing respectable and pleasant, but deep down suffering from frustrated, repressed desires. Sigmund Freud took these ideas a step further and proposed that sexual desire was the main motivation in life. In his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), Freud explored this notion in some depth. He called dreams the ‘royal road to the unconscious’. This meant that dreams can tell us about the language of the unconscious. In particular, they can reveal repressed desires. In such a way, Freud would interpret certain objects in dreams as being sexual symbols: apertures of any sort could be metaphors for the vagina, while protruding objects could represent the erect penis – what Freud called a phallic symbol. There is no doubt that Hyde is an intensely sexual creature, playing out his sexual fantasies in the smoggy streets of London.

It could be argued that Hyde is also a metaphor for man’s ‘unconscious’: he is the ape-like creature whom we would all rather hide from civilised society. While our unconscious might want to punch people who annoy us, our civilised side prevents us from doing so. While we might want to have sex much more frequently than we do, our desire to appear respectable and not promiscuous stops us from propositioning every person we fancy. It is clear that Hyde suffers from no such inhibitions. Thus, there is a powerful argument that the novel is even more disturbing because Hyde represents the unconscious in all of us.

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**Selected Reading on The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde**

*Norton Critical Editions*

**The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde**

(Norton: 2003)

This is by far and away the best edition of the book itself, packed with great critical essays as well as comprehensive notes.

David Daiches

**Robert Louis Stevenson and His World**

(Pictorial Biography: 1973)

Although this is some 35 years old, it remains the best book for evoking the world that Stevenson inhabited and has an excellent section on Jekyll and Hyde.
Notes, Quotes and Discussion

Important extracts and quotations from the novel with commentary and discussion points.

The discussion points below are deliberately questions with no right or wrong answers given. They are there to help you think in more depth about particular aspects of the book.

N.B. All the following quotations are from the complete, unabridged text.

Section 1
From Story of the Door

MR. UTTERSON the lawyer was a man of a rugged countenance, that was never lighted by a smile; cold, scanty and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary, and yet somehow lovable...

Stevenson begins the novel with a description of Utterson, depicting him as an unappealing, down-to-earth, awkward individual, who is both loyal and intelligent. It’s important in the context of what is to come that Utterson is very ordinary, but clever. Utterson becomes the detective figure in the novel, searching for the terrible truth about his friend Dr Jekyll. If he had been a more interesting individual, the narrative could have become too focused upon his personality as opposed to his reactions to events.
Because he is so very ordinary, like you or I investigating the matter, an everyman figure, the reader values his responses more. The story could never have worked if a character like Sherlock Holmes had investigated, because the detective would have dominated the narrative and made everything appear too fantastical. Above all, Stevenson, for all the fantasy elements in his narrative, wants to tell the truth about mankind.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why does Stevenson begin the novel by describing the character of Utterson?

*His affections, like ivy, were the growth of time, they implied no aptness in the object. Hence, no doubt, the bond that united him to Mr. Richard Enfield, his distant kinsman, the well-known man about town.*

There is an irony about the description of Utterson’s attachment to Enfield here: Utterson is undiscriminating in his friendships, they grow like ‘ivy over time’. As we have seen, Utterson tends to befriend men on their way down in society. Perhaps the playboy Enfield, who has been out all night, is one of these people. Enfield is like Jekyll – someone who clearly secretly likes the high life – but we never discover what pleasures he enjoys. Enfield proceeds to tell us about a horrific assault that he saw which we later realise was committed by Mr Hyde. Re-reading the novel, we realise that Enfield himself is a potential Jekyll/Hyde figure: his moral disgust at Hyde because he, too, may secretly relish committing such a deed. Enfield marks the beginning of Utterson’s investigation of the mystery of his friend Dr Jekyll; Stevenson’s skill as a writer is to make the reader realise at the end of the novel that Enfield is a potential Hyde himself. Thus the beginning of the novel is enriched by the end.

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**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why does Stevenson have Enfield and not Utterson describe the assault?

*Two doors from one corner, on the left hand going east, the line was broken by the entry of a court; and just at that point, a certain sinister block of building thrust forward its gable on the street. It was two storeys high; showed no window, nothing but a door on the lower storey and a blind forehead of discoloured wall on the upper; and bore in every feature the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence. Mr. Enfield and the lawyer were on the other side of the bystreet; but when they came abreast of the entry, the former lifted up his cane and pointed. ‘Did you ever remark that door?’ he asked; and when his companion had replied in the affirmative, ‘It is connected in my mind,’ added he, ‘with a very odd story.’*

Throughout the novel, the pages are soaked with imagery, which is well illustrated here: the idea that behind the respectable facade of the street, with its clean, well-kept houses, there is this place of ‘prolonged and sordid negligence’. The very city itself reflects the disease of mankind – our negligence of inner desires and dreams; the door is the gateway to the dark parts of the human soul, a threshold through which we step to find our true desires. In this way, Stevenson cleverly manages to make much of his novel metaphorical, with the city a metaphor for the divided human soul. What’s more, the ordinary, everyday objects of the city become full of sinister resonances: doors, pavements, windows, shops, even parks are merely facades, cover-ups, disguising the inherent Hyde-like ugliness of mankind.
**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why does Stevenson take such care to describe the city in this novel?

Well, sir, the two ran into one another naturally enough at the corner; and then came the horrible part of the thing; for the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground. It sounds nothing to hear, but it was hellish to see. It wasn't like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut.

Notice how Enfield's description of Hyde – whose identity we don't know yet – is full of wonder, almost admiration. The adverb 'calmly' suggests that Hyde has no scruples about crushing the child. When Enfield says that it 'sounds like nothing to hear' he means that he can't quite convey in words how 'hellish' it was to see. His description of Hyde as 'some damned Juggernaut' suggests that his horror of the deed is tinged with admiration. Obviously, in Stevenson's time the word Juggernaut did not mean a lorry; it referred to a massive, immovable force which crushes everything in its way, the origin of the word coming from the Hindu term Jagannath, an avatar of Vishnu, a crude idol of Krishna. Some critics have suggested that Enfield's description is actually a veiled account of a brutal rape. This is possibly the case. Certainly, though, on re-reading we are made aware that there is a sense of wonder from Enfield that Hyde should be so brazen, so open, so unstoppable in his actions.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson create a sense of horror at this point?

But he was quite easy and sneering. 'Set your mind at rest,' says he; 'I will stay with you till the banks open, and cash the cheque myself.' So we all set off, the doctor, and the child's father, and our friend and myself, and passed the rest of the night in my chambers; and next day, when we had breakfasted, went in a body to the bank. I gave in the cheque myself, and said I had every reason to believe it was a forgery. Not a bit of it. The cheque was genuine.'

The mystery of the man deepens. His offer to pay for his misdeeds is initially regarded with scepticism, but, after waiting with him until the banks open, Enfield finds that the cheque is genuine. In other words, the brute is not a common criminal. Notice also how our notions of justice have changed: Hyde would today be jailed for a brutal assault; in those days paying the father of the child was enough recompense. At the heart of the novel, there is a huge contradiction: Hyde behaves like a brute, but has all the resources of a 'gentleman'. In other words, he does not conduct himself as should a person of his class.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How and why does Stevenson deepen the mystery here?

'He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No, sir; I can make no hand of it; I can't describe him. And it's not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment.'
After the practical mystery of where Hyde gets his money from, the reader is faced with a more intractable one: his physical appearance. In many of the film versions of the novel, Hyde is portrayed as an out-and-out monster, deformed and grotesque. And yet in the novel itself, it is clear that this is not the case. Enfield says: ‘...he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn’t specify the point’. In other words, there is nothing actually physically wrong with his appearance, no noticeable deformity; it is much more to do with the way his inner soul is played out on his face – he merely has a ‘detestable’ look. Ultimately, though, he escapes description. There is a marvellous irony here: Hyde is beyond description in words and yet is a character in a novel. Stevenson doesn’t actually want to describe him at all, other than he is a ‘small, hairy man’. He wants his readers to construct their own visions of inner ugliness; he wants Hyde to infiltrate our imaginations. For me, Hyde looks like some people I know who have an angry, sneering sense of superiority spread all across their face.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

How do you think Stevenson creates a sense of horror in his description of Hyde?

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**From Search for Mr Hyde**

On this night, however, he took up a candle and went into his business room. There he opened his safe, took from the most private part of it a document endorsed on the envelope as Dr. Jekyll’s Will, and sat down with a clouded brow to study its contents. The will was holograph; for Mr. Utterson, though he took charge of it now that it was made, had refused to lend the least assistance in the making of it; it provided not only that, in case of the decease of Henry Jekyll, M.D., D.C.L.,

**LL.D., F.R.S., &c., all his possessions were to pass into the hands of his ‘friend and benefactor Edward Hyde’...**

The novel contains a number of descriptions of secret places: we have already seen a description of Hyde’s door, and now we have one of Utterson’s safe, which contains the bizarre will of Edward Hyde – and no doubt many other secrets of his clients. Utterson – the normally unflappable, sensible Utterson – is perturbed by the will, because in it, the respectable, garlanded Jekyll gives all his estate to Edward Hyde. The mystery deepens: why would Jekyll give his money to someone that Utterson suspects of being the brute who attacked the girl? Stevenson cleverly plays on a motif that appears a great deal in Victorian novels: that of the will. Already there is a sense that Jekyll is aware that he will die soon and has made some sort of provision for it.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

How does the will create a sense of mystery and suspense?

‘We had,’ was the reply. ‘But it is more than ten years since Henry Jekyll became too fanciful for me. He began to go wrong, wrong in mind; and though, of course, I continue to take an interest in him for old sake’s sake as they say, I see and I have seen devilish little of the man. Such unscientific balderdash,’ added the doctor, flushing suddenly purple, ‘would have estranged Damon and Pythias.’

The appearance of the superior Lanyon, with his air of pomposity and arrogance, gives us a sense of the social world that Jekyll inhabits. Whereas Utterson is essentially a ‘loner’, we are aware that Lanyon enjoys all the fruits of
being an important member of the scientific community. Lanyon’s dismissal of Jekyll’s ‘fanciful’ science as ‘balderdash’ is ironic in the light of what happens at the end of the novel, because he discovers to the cost of his life that it isn’t balderdash at all. Damon and Pythias were characters in Greek mythology who were inseparable friends. When Pythias was sentenced to death, Damon offered to take his place. Neither wanted to live if it meant that the other died. Lanyon compares himself to Pythias, claiming that he was Jekyll’s inseparable friend and would have died for him just as Pythias offered to die for Damon. However, Jekyll’s science was such ‘balderdash’ that Lanyon fell out with him, despit being such a close friend. This prompts the question: what exactly was Jekyll doing with his experiments to provoke such an extreme reaction in Lanyon?

**DISCUSSION POINT**

What do you think of Stevenson’s presentation of Lanyon? In what ways does he seem to be a bit of a hypocrite?

...that human Juggernaut trod the child down and passed on regardless of her screams. Or else he would see a room in a rich house, where his friend lay asleep, dreaming and smiling at his dreams; and then the door of that room would be opened, the curtains of the bed plucked apart, the sleeper recalled, and, lo! There would stand by his side a figure to whom power was given, and even at that dead hour, he must rise and do its bidding. The figure in these two phases haunted the lawyer all night...

Utterson’s dream is very important for a number of reasons. It is probably very similar to Stevenson’s dream in which he first found the inspiration to write the novel. Moreover, the dream highlights some of the key themes of the novel: the secrecy with which the Juggernaut appears, its face never being seen, its sneaking into a ‘rich house’, its unstoppable nature, the way in which it compels its subjects to ‘do its bidding’. In this way the Juggernaut is an embodiment of all our unconscious desires, the things we would rather repress but can’t, the hidden part of ourselves. And the dream is scary because it is about our most innermost places of safety being penetrated by a monster: our homes, our bedrooms, our beds.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why are dreams so important in this story?

From that time forward, Mr. Utterson began to haunt the door in the by-street of shops. In the morning before office hours, at noon when business was plenty and time scarce, at night under the face of the fogged city moon, by all lights and at all hours of solitude or concourse, the lawyer was to be found on his chosen post. ‘If he be Mr. Hyde,’ he had thought, ‘I shall be Mr. Seek.’

This is a particularly suspenseful moment in the novel, with the ‘fogged city moon’ watching down on Utterson as he waits and waits for the appearance of the mysterious Mr Hyde. The novel is, at this point, a grotesque detective novel. Indeed, many people, including Edgar Allan Poe, have credited Stevenson with inventing the detective genre in the way he structures this narrative. It is, as well as a compulsive psychological horror story, a great detective work.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

How does Stevenson create suspense here?
'And now,' said the other, 'how did you know me?' ‘By description,’ was the reply. ‘Whose description?’ ‘We have common friends,’ said Mr. Utterson. ‘Common friends!’ echoed Mr. Hyde, a little hoarsely. ‘Who are they?’ ‘Jekyll, for instance,’ said the lawyer. ‘He never told you,’ cried Mr. Hyde, with a flush of anger. ‘I did not think you would have lied.’ ‘Come,’ said Mr. Utterson, ‘that is not fitting language.’ The other snarled aloud into a savage laugh; and the next moment, with extraordinary quickness, he had unlocked the door and disappeared into the house.

One of the pleasures of re-reading the story is that we begin to see things from Hyde’s perspective: we realise that Hyde knows that Utterson is lying but can’t say so, despite wanting to, because it would give the game away. There are multiple ironies: the fact that Utterson believes they have common friends and that Hyde knows for certain that Utterson has lied because he, Hyde, is Jekyll. Furthermore, Hyde almost gives himself away by saying ‘I did not think you would have lied’: in other words, Jekyll is surprised to find that Utterson is lying. This is Jekyll speaking: re-reading the novel one is made aware that Jekyll is very much present in Hyde and that, far from there being a switch in personality, it is more that Jekyll’s repressed side is allowed full flower in Hyde. The ‘savage laugh’ is the laugh of a man who loves not being recognised, who loves being someone else entirely.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why is this moment very ironic and suspenseful, even on second reading?

Mr. Hyde was pale and dwarfish, he gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation, he had a displeasing smile, he had borne himself to the lawyer with a sort of murderous mixture of timidity and boldness, and he spoke with a husky, whispering and somewhat broken voice; all these were points against him, but not all of these together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing, and fear with which Mr. Utterson regarded him. ‘There must be something else,’ said the perplexed gentleman. ‘There is something more, if I could find a name for it. God bless me, the man seems hardly human! Something troglodytic, shall we say?... O my poor old Harry Jekyll, if ever I read Satan’s signature upon a face, it is on that of your new friend.’

We have here another description of Hyde, but as with the description of Enfield, Utterson’s perceptions of him are very subjective: we learn little of substance about Hyde’s appearance other than he is small and that he smiles, speaking with a husky voice. Notice too how Utterson describes him as ‘troglodytic’: troglodytes were cave-dwellers who were very much on Victorians’ minds because Darwin’s theory of evolution had pointed out that all of us were descended from them. In other words, Hyde is a form of primitive man, an embodiment of the fears of Victorian Britain. On first reading, we experience the suspense of Utterson’s worry for his friend, then, on second reading, we realise that Utterson’s interpretation has real ironies: he is speaking of his friend himself. His friend has become Satan.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

What in your view are the traits and behaviours of Satan, the devil? If you were to describe him, how would you do so? Does Hyde have the signature of Satan upon him?
'I saw Mr. Hyde go in by the old dissecting-room door, Poole,' he said. 'Is that right, when Dr. Jekyll is from home?'

'Quite right, Mr. Utterson, sir,' replied the servant. 'Mr. Hyde has a key.'

Stevenson’s feel for the symbolic is wonderful here. Hyde has the key! The key to Jekyll’s innermost chamber, to his laboratory of secrets, to his dissecting room. Hyde has, in metaphorical terms, dissected Jekyll’s character, cut off the extraneous elements, leaving the inner core of malevolence, of lust, of rage.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson deepen the mystery here? In what way is it symbolic that Hyde has the key to the dissecting room?

_Things cannot continue as they are. It turns me cold to think of this creature stealing like a thief to Harry’s bedside; poor Harry, what a wakening! And the danger of it! For if this Hyde suspects the existence of the will, he may grow impatient to inherit._

Stevenson creates suspense on first reading by making the reader wonder whether Hyde will murder Jekyll. On second reading, this reflection gains more power. It leads us to realise that far from ‘stealing like a thief’ to Harry’s bedside, Hyde has been invited there; Jekyll has embraced him. Then, on second reading, a further mystery opens up: what are the real reasons for Jekyll to embrace Hyde?

We also see Stevenson developing the character of Utterson. The lawyer has been pulled out of his emotionally retarded shell by the mystery: he is beginning to become really emotionally engaged. He is depressed by the thought of his friend being so affected. It is very important that he becomes more and more anxious as the narrative progresses, so that we too begin to worry for Jekyll. Vital to the novel’s success is our dismay at the corruption of Jekyll: it is a corruption that all of us could fall into.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson create suspense here? How does he develop the character of Utterson?

**From Dr Jekyll Was Quite at Ease**

_'What I heard was abominable,’ said Utterson. ‘It can make no change. You do not understand my position,’ returned the doctor, with a certain incoherency of manner. ‘I am painfully situated, Utterson; my position is a very strange! – a very strange one. It is one of those affairs that cannot be mended by talking.’_

_'Jekyll,’ said Utterson, ‘you know me: I am a man to be trusted. Make a clean breast of this in confidence; and I make no doubt I can get you out of it.’_

As with so many moments in the novel, this scene gains more poignancy and mystery on second reading. We realise that Jekyll has a chance to confess to Utterson about what is going on here, that Utterson might possibly understand, but he decides not to. This is because he is too attached to Hyde. He enjoys being Hyde and Jekyll! His split personality brings him great pleasure. At the heart of Jekyll there is an inarticulacy, an unwillingness and inability to talk through the issues at stake. In this sense, Jekyll is like all deeply repressed people: unable and unwilling to discuss any difficult issues. It is this
reluctance to talk which is at the heart of his repression; Hyde lives and thrives on his silence. Stevenson is very much a forerunner of Freud in suggesting that the most damaging aspects of our personality exist in the areas that can’t be talked about.

**Discussion Point**
Why is the theme of silence so important in the novel?

Jekyll’s insistence that Utterson keeps Hyde ‘a private matter’ is very important. Jekyll is clearly worried about the effect that his association with Hyde would have on his reputation were it to become known. On second reading we realise that Jekyll is enjoying being Hyde at this point and is confident that he can dismiss him whenever he wants. In other words, Jekyll is deluding himself that he is not Hyde. While worried that Utterson will embarrass him by revealing his connection with Hyde, Jekyll is confident that all will be well. We realise that Jekyll is an awful and hideous hypocrite: he has committed some atrocious crimes in the name of Hyde but shows no remorse or repentance. He makes no vow to give up Hyde. Far from it: he is clearly intending to continue his double existence until he sees fit to dismiss Hyde.

**Discussion Point**
Why is the theme of complacency so important in the novel?

*From The Carew Murder Case*

And then all of a sudden he broke out in a great flame of anger, stamping with his foot, brandishing the cane, and carrying on (as the maid described it) like a madman. The old gentleman took a step back, with the air of one very much surprised and a trifle hurt; and at that Mr. Hyde broke out of all bounds, and clubbed him to the earth. And the next moment, with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot, and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones were audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway. At the horror of these sights and sounds, the maid fainted.

It is a year after the end of the last chapter, and a maidservant witnesses the terrible murder of Sir Danvers Carew an ‘aged and beautiful gentleman’ of kind temperament. He becomes embroiled in an argument with Hyde, who suddenly breaks out in a ‘flame of anger’. There is a ‘fire’ at the heart of Hyde, an unquenchable rage: in this sense, he is a forerunner to the ‘Angry Young Men’ who peopled the British literary world in the 1950s and 1960s. Like them, he attacks establishment figures such as Carew, not for anything they’ve done but for what they symbolise: they are embodiments of the repressed emotional world which keeps people like Hyde from ever expressing themselves. Stevenson really enjoys writing this passage, using some of his most colourful prose to
describe the murder: the sound of the crunching bones, the 'storm of blows', the jumping on the body. In such a way, he creates a really horrific scene – an innocent old man being clubbed to death. Hyde chooses his victims amongst the defenceless: children and old men.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson create a sense of horror here?

‘Yes,’ said he, ‘I recognise him. I am sorry to say that this is Sir Danvers Carew.’

‘Good God, sir,’ exclaimed the officer, ‘is it possible?’ And the next moment his eye lighted up with professional ambition. ‘This will make a deal of noise,’ he said. ‘And perhaps you can help us to the man.’ And he briefly narrated what the maid had seen, and showed the broken stick.

Notice how Stevenson explores a theme of the book here: that of hypocrisy. The police officer almost seems pleased that Carew, a respected member of society, has been murdered because solving the case would advance his own professional reputation. Notice also how the murder of Carew contrasts with the assault on the child at the beginning of the novel: while the assault was covered up with ‘hush money’, Carew’s social position means his murder will be properly investigated.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Who are the hypocritical characters in this novel? What do they do and say that makes them hypocritical?

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Mr. Hyde had numbered few familiars! – his family could nowhere be traced; he had never been photographed; and the few who could describe him differed widely, as common observers will. Only on one point were they agreed; and that was the haunting sense of unexpressed deformity with which the fugitive impressed his beholders.

The fact that Hyde can’t be traced or described creates much of the suspense in the novel, especially on a second reading. The fact is, Hyde is all of us: he is our repressed, inarticulate rage, our hidden desires, our ‘unexpressed’ deformities. The reason why people can’t describe him is because they can’t describe their own dark side. The novel is about being inarticulate, about not being able to describe the very thing that most threatens us all: our own destructive instincts.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
What are human beings’ darkest, most repressed desires? How does Stevenson explore such desires in this novel?

Section 2
From The Incident of the Letter

The doctor had bought the house from the heirs of a celebrated surgeon; and his own tastes being rather chemical than anatomical, had changed the destination of the block at the bottom of the garden. It was the first time that the lawyer had been received in that part of his friend’s quarters; and he eyed the dingy windowless structure with curiosity, and gazed round with a distasteful sense of strangeness as he crossed the theatre, once crowded with eager students and now lying gaunt and silent, the tables laden with chemical apparatus, the floor strewn with crates and littered with
packing straw, and the light falling dimly through the foggy cupola. At the further end, a flight of stairs mounted to a door covered with red baize; and through this, Mr. Utterson was at last received into the doctor’s cabinet.

It was a large room, fitted round with glass presses, furnished among other things, with a cheval-glass and a business table, and looking out upon the court by three dusty windows barred with iron. The fire burned in the grate; a lamp was set lighted on the chimney shelf, for even in the houses the fog began to lie thickly; and there, close up to the warmth, sat Dr. Jekyll, looking deadly sick.

Utterson now begins to delve deeper and deeper into the mystery of Jekyll and Hyde. Symbolically, he enters a part of the house he has never been in before. There is an air of abandonment about the operating theatre – once crowded with students. The cupola is ‘foggy’ and the quarters are ‘windowless’: there is a deep sense of secrecy, of covering things up, of confusion and fogginess. Entering through another door, he penetrates Jekyll’s lair: the place where Hyde was created. Significantly, it is barred with iron and shrouded in fog. Jekyll is now deadly sick, and quite unlike the happy, complacent person Utterson spoke about to Hyde a year before. There is the stink of corruption about the place: the sense of a sordid hiding place.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson create suspense here?

‘I have had what is far more to the purpose,’ returned the doctor solemnly: ‘I have had a lesson! – O God, Utterson, what a lesson I have had!’ And he covered his face for a moment with his hands.

On second reading, we realise that Jekyll is still absolving himself of the blame for the murder, even though he is clearly disturbed by what he has done. He merely feels he has had a ‘lesson’, that he has learnt something, rather than feeling what he has done is beyond the pale.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson convey Jekyll’s despair here?

‘Well, sir,’ returned the clerk, ‘there’s a rather singular resemblance; the two hands are in many points identical; only differently sloped.’ ‘Rather quaint,’ said Utterson, ‘It is, as you say, rather quaint,’ returned Guest. ‘I wouldn’t speak of this note,’ said the master. ‘No, sir,’ said the clerk. ‘I understand.’ But no sooner was Mr. Utterson alone that night, than he locked the note into his safe, where it reposed from that time forward. ‘What!’ he thought. ‘Henry Jekyll forge for a murderer! And his blood ran cold in his veins.’

Stevenson develops the theme of corruption by making Utterson think that Jekyll has forged a note in order to protect a murderer. Notice how the servant is more perceptive than his master in seeing that Hyde’s handwriting is the same as Jekyll’s. Utterson is careful to keep everything a secret, locking the note in the safe. Secrecy is all. He wishes to hide Jekyll’s corruption, his dirty secret, from the world. In such a way, Utterson is presented as being similar to Jekyll.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why does Utterson lock the note away in the safe? What do you think of Stevenson’s presentation of Utterson here?
Section 3
From Remarkable Incident of Dr Lanyon

‘I have had a great shock,’ he said, ‘and I shall never recover. It is a question of weeks. Well, life has been pleasant; I liked it; yes, sir, I used to like it. I sometimes think if we knew all we should be more glad to get away.’

‘Jekyll is ill, too,’ observed Utterson. ‘Have you seen him?’ But Lanyon’s face changed, and he held up a trembling hand. ‘I wish to see or hear no more of Dr. Jekyll,’ he said, in a loud, unsteady voice. ‘I am quite done with that person; and I beg that you will spare me any allusion to one whom I regard as dead.’

How changed Lanyon is since we last saw him! He is no longer the slick, superficial, brash, arrogant man-about-town, the know-it-all doctor. He is an utterly broken man, about to die. The sentence ‘I sometimes think if we knew all we should be more glad to get away’ is crucial and haunting. The pronouncement is mysterious (like so much in the book) but we do have a sense that Lanyon is speaking for all mankind here: if we knew the truth about ourselves, we’d all want to ‘get away’ – to die. He then further enhances the mystery by declaring that he regards Jekyll as dead. He is clearly frightened by Jekyll; we realise on second reading that this is because Jekyll is too similar to him. Stevenson keeps up the narrative tension by having Lanyon tell us that the truth will come out after he has died. It is fascinating that Lanyon can’t tell the truth while he is still alive. On second reading we are aware that Lanyon knows the truth about Jekyll at this point, and can’t face articulating the horror of it all.

Jekyll and Lanyon both wish to remain silent on the reasons for their falling out – and neither wishes to meet again. These men’s response to the crisis is silence – no discussion, no negotiation, no exploration of the issues – because it is too horrifying to contemplate. On second reading we may find Jekyll utterly contemptible here. The line ‘If I am the chief of sinners, I am the chief of sufferers also’ is telling. Overwhelmingly, it is himself for whom Jekyll feels sorry; there is not much sense of repentance, only a confession that he is the ‘chief of sinners’.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How do our perceptions of Jekyll change from our first to our second reading?

**DISCUSSION POINT**
What is Lanyon so afraid of? Why does he regard Jekyll as dead? What do you think of Stevenson’s presentation of Lanyon here?

The quarrel with Lanyon was incurable. ‘I do not blame our old friend,’ Jekyll wrote, ‘but I share his view that we must never meet. I mean from henceforth to lead a life of extreme seclusion; you must not be surprised, nor must you doubt my friendship, if my door is often shut even to you. You must suffer me to go my own dark way. I have brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name. If I am the chief of sinners, I am the chief of sufferers also. I could not think that this earth contained a place for sufferings and terrors so unmanning; and you can do but one thing, Utterson, to lighten this destiny, and that is to respect my silence.’
'That is just what I was about to venture to propose,' returned the doctor with a smile. But the words were hardly uttered, before the smile was struck out of his face and succeeded by an expression of such abject terror and despair, as froze the very blood of the two gentlemen below. They saw it but for a glimpse, for the window was instantly thrust down; but that glimpse had been sufficient, and they turned and left the court without a word. In silence, too, they traversed the by-street; and it was not until they had come into a neighbouring thoroughfare, where even upon a Sunday there were still some stirrings of life, that Mr. Utterson at last turned and looked at his companion. They were both pale; and there was an answering horror in their eyes.

'God forgive us, God forgive us,' said Mr. Utterson.

But Mr. Enfield only nodded his head very seriously and walked on once more in silence.

Jekyll locks himself away from everyone, demanding secrecy from Utterson. Later, Utterson and Mr Enfield stop at the back door of Jekyll's laboratory. To their surprise they see Jekyll, who is clearly pleased to see them. But then, as we learn from the passage above, an expression of ‘abject terror and despair’ comes upon him and the window is ‘thrust down’. The two men have glimpsed the face and are disturbed by what they have seen. On second reading, we realise that Jekyll has suddenly changed into Hyde again and has to hide himself away. The two men have an inkling of this; they are gaining a sense of Jekyll's degradation.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson create a sense of horror here?

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**From The Last Night**

'Mr. Utterson, sir, asking to see you,' he called; and even as he did so, once more violently signed to the lawyer to give ear. A voice answered from within: ‘Tell him I cannot see anyone,’ it said complainingly. ‘Thank you, sir,’ said Poole, with a note of something like triumph in his voice; and taking up his candle, he led Mr. Utterson back across the yard and into the great kitchen, where the fire was out and the beetles were leaping on the floor. ‘Sir,’ he said, looking Mr. Utterson in the eyes, ‘was that my master’s voice?’ ‘It seems much changed,’ replied the lawyer, very pale, but giving look for look. ‘Changed? Well, yes, I think so,’ said the butler. ‘Have I been twenty years in this man’s house, to be deceived about his voice? No, sir; master’s made away with; he was made away with, eight days ago, when we heard him cry out upon the name of God; and who’s in there instead of him, and why it stays there, is a thing that cries to Heaven, Mr. Utterson!'

The audio version of the book is incredibly powerful here, with the strangulated mingled voice of Jekyll and Hyde speaking from behind the locked door. There is something unbearably frightening about someone locking himself in a room, refusing to come out and only speaking in strangulated phrases through the door. Once again, on second reading we sense the corruption: the Jekyll we knew has fallen very low indeed, his subconscious, in the form of Hyde, now becoming manifest.

There is now a real tension in the narrative: Utterson has in his possession a letter from Lanyon which is not to be opened until the death or disappearance of Henry Jekyll. The reader is desperate to know what is in the letter; Utterson, being the faithful lawyer that he is, keeps it sealed. Likewise, the door is locked. The reader has reached an impasse, a locking away of secrets, which we know will be overcome soon.
**DISCUSSION POINT**

How does Stevenson maintain the narrative tension here?

“Well, sir, every day, ay, twice and thrice in the same day there have been orders and complaints, and I have been sent flying to all the wholesale chemists in town. Every time I brought the stuff back there would be another paper telling me to return it, because it was not pure, and another order to a different firm. This drug is wanted bitter bad, sir, whatever for?’

Jekyll is behaving like a drug addict, demanding chemicals from the wholesale chemists in town.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

In what ways do you think the story is a parable about drug addiction?

‘Seen him?’ repeated Mr. Utterson. ‘Well? ‘That’s it!’ said Poole. ‘It was this way. I came suddenly into the theatre from the garden. It seems he had slipped out to look for his drug, or whatever it is; for the cabinet door was open, and there he was at the far end of the room, digging among the crates. He looked up when I came in, gave a kind of a cry, and whipped upstairs into the cabinet. It was but for one minute that I saw him, but the hair stood upon my head like quills. Sir, if that was my master, why, had he a mask upon his face? Why did he cry out like a rat, and run from me? I have served him long enough. And then…’ the man paused and passed his hand over his face.

The horror deepens when we realise that Jekyll is wearing a mask. Again, we have more images of secrecy, of hiding bodily corruption, of covering up moral decay. Jekyll, who was once so arrogant and content, is now reduced to scuttling around like a frightened rat in his own home. The reaction of the loyal servant, Poole, who raises a hand over his face, is moving: he is aware that something terrible has happened. It will mean nothing is ever the same again.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why is Jekyll wearing a mask? What is the effect of him wearing the mask?

‘Sir,’ said the butler, turning to a sort of mottled pallor, ‘that thing was not my master, and there’s the truth. My master!’ – here he looked round him, and began to whisper! – ‘is a tall fine build of a man, and this was more of a dwarf.’ Utterson attempted to protest. ‘O, sir,’ cried Poole, ‘do you think I do not know my master after twenty years? Do you think I do not know where his head comes to in the cabinet door, where I saw him every morning of my life? No, sir, that thing in the mask was never Dr. Jekyll! – God knows what it is, but it was never Dr. Jekyll; and it is the belief of my heart that there was murder done.’

Finally, Poole bursts out with what he thinks is the truth. We realise on second reading that there was no murder: gradually Jekyll’s true nature is being revealed.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

How does Stevenson create a real sense of psychological horror here?
London hummed solemnly all around; but nearer at hand, the stillness was only broken by the sound of a footfall moving to and fro along the cabinet floor. ‘So it will walk all day, sir,’ whispered Poole; ‘a-y, and the better part of the night. Only when a new sample comes from the chemist, there’s a bit of a break. And it’s an ill conscience that’s such an enemy to rest! Ah, sir, there’s blood foully shed in every step of it! But hark again, a little closer! – put your heart in your ears, Mr. Utterson, and tell me, is that the doctor’s foot? The steps fell lightly and oddly, with a certain swing, for all they went so slowly; it was different indeed from the heavy creaking tread of Henry Jekyll. Utterson sighed. ‘Is there never anything else?’ he asked. Poole nodded. ‘Once,’ he said. ‘Once I heard it weeping!’

‘Weeping? How that?’ said the lawyer, conscious of a sudden chill of horror.

‘Weeping like a woman or a lost soul,’ said the butler. ‘I came away with that upon my heart, that I could have wept too.’ But now the ten minutes drew to an end.

Stevenson creates a sense of horror not only through his powerful use of visual imagery – the locked doors, the apparatus in the laboratory, the foggy London streets – but also through his description of sound. The ‘husky’ voice of Hyde, the ‘audible shattering’ of Carew’s bones, and the sound of the footsteps here, which fall ‘lightly and oddly, with a certain swing’. They are unmistakeably the loping, almost merry steps of Hyde, who has taken over Jekyll almost entirely. However, we realise on second reading that there is something of Jekyll left: the self-pitying part. He is heard ‘weeping like a woman or a lost soul’. And so we see how the novel grows in richness the more you read it.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

How effective do you think Stevenson’s use of sound is in this novel? Discuss films you have seen which use sound to create horror – e.g. creaking doors, etc. When and why is sound used? Why is it effective in creating suspense?

The besiegers, appalled by their own riot and the stillness that had succeeded, stood back a little and peered in. There lay the cabinet before their eyes in the quiet lamplight, a good fire glowing and chattering on the hearth, the kettle singing its thin strain, a drawer or two open, papers neatly set forth on the business table, and nearer the fire, the things laid out for tea; the quietest room, you would have said, and, but for the glazed presses full of chemicals, the most commonplace that night in London. Right in the midst there lay the body of a man sorely contorted and still twitching. They drew near on tiptoe, turned it on his back, and beheld the face of Edward Hyde. He was dressed in clothes too large for him, clothes of the doctor’s bigness; the cords of his face still moved with a semblance of life, but life was quite gone; and by the crushed phial in the hand and the strong smell of kernels that hung upon the air, Utterson knew that he was looking on the body of a selfdestroyer.

‘We have come too late,’ he said sternly, ‘whether to save or punish. Hyde is gone to his account; and it only remains for us to find the body of your master.’

The brilliance of the novel is that it repays re-reading. On the first reading, the mystery deepens because we think that Hyde has murdered Jekyll and then possibly killed himself. On second reading, we realise that there has indeed been a terrible battle between Jekyll and Hyde, which Jekyll has won because he has managed to kill Hyde. We know from Jekyll’s subsequent narrative that Hyde has desperately wanted to live – that he is the embodiment of the survival of the fittest, the will to power. And there is a sense that Hyde has indeed won because he has hijacked the body of Jekyll.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

In what way does the novel explore the ideas of Charles Darwin?
They mounted the stair in silence, and still, with an occasional awestruck glance at the dead body, proceeded more thoroughly to examine the contents of the cabinet. At one table, there were traces of chemical work; various measured heaps of some white salt being laid on glass saucers, as though for an experiment in which the unhappy man had been prevented. ‘That is the same drug that I was always bringing him,’ said Poole; and even as he spoke, the kettle with a startling noise boiled over. This brought them to the fireside, where the easy chair was drawn cosily up and the tea things stood ready to the sitter’s elbow, the very sugar in the cup. There were several books on a shelf; one lay beside the tea things open, and Utterson was amazed to find a copy of a pious work, for which Jekyll had several times expressed a great esteem, annotated, in his own hand, with startling blasphemies.

Stevenson’s imagination is chilling here. Perhaps more spooky than the discovery of Hyde’s dead body in the oversized clothes of Jekyll is the description of the dead man’s things, the noise of the kettle boiling over, the sugar waiting for the cup of tea, and the ‘pious’ book scrawled with blasphemies. On second reading it’s apparent that Jekyll had been trying to make himself comfortable and attempting to guide himself in a religious and pious direction when suddenly he was overwhelmed by Hyde and realised that he had to kill himself. The blasphemies indicate Hyde’s childish nature, his rebellion against the strictures of conventional Christianity, his wish to step outside normal moral boundaries into the realm of unfettered desire and unchained emotions.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why is the description of the dead man’s things so effective here?
‘Have you got it?’ he cried. ‘Have you got it?’ And so lively was his impatience that he even laid his hand upon my arm and sought to shake me. I put him back, conscious at his touch of a certain icy pang along my blood. ‘Come, sir,’ said I. ‘You forget that I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance. Be seated, if you please.’ And I showed him an example, and sat down myself in my customary seat and with as fair an imitation of my ordinary manner to a patient, as the lateness of the hour, the nature of my preoccupations, and the horror I had of my visitor, would suffer me to master. ‘I beg your pardon, Dr. Lanyon,’ he replied, civilly enough.

As with other encounters with Hyde, this passage pays re-reading after finishing the novel. In doing so, one realises that Hyde has forgotten that he is Hyde; he thinks he looks like Jekyll and assumes that Lanyon recognises him. He is then brought up short when Lanyon rather sniffily says he does not recognise him. We definitely hear Jekyll speaking when he begs Lanyon’s pardon. However, we realise that the impatience which demands the potion is very much that of Hyde. In such a way, we realise that Hyde is not different from Jekyll at all: he is Jekyll.

Notice that Lanyon’s reaction is ‘having an icy pang’. As with other reactions to Hyde, there is a sense that the pang is one of recognition, that Hyde troubles something in the innermost soul of man.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

What does Stevenson reveal about Hyde and Jekyll at this point in the novel?

‘There it is, sir,’ said I, pointing to the drawer, where it lay on the floor behind a table, and still covered with the sheet. He sprang to it, and then paused, and laid his hand upon his heart; I could hear his teeth grate with the convulsive action of his jaws; and his face was so ghastly to see that I grew alarmed both for his life and reason.

When we re-read the novel, we realise that there are constant arguments and tussles occurring between Jekyll and Hyde: Jekyll forces Hyde to disguise the fact that he is really a respectable doctor, while Hyde despises Jekyll’s repressed nature, the way in which he leaves his desires unexplored. Here, the urgency with which Hyde springs to the potion is Jekyll’s own desire to return to his civilised exterior, to get his emotions under control, to suppress the rage and desire within him. So it’s ironic that Lanyon feels alarmed for his life and reason: these are the very things he is trying to reclaim.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why is Hyde’s thirst for the potion so disturbing?

He thanked me with a smiling nod, measured out a few minims of the red tincture and added one of the powders. The mixture, which was at first of a reddish hue, began, in proportion as the crystals melted, to brighten in colour, to effervesce audibly, and to throw off small fumes of vapour. Suddenly, and at the same moment, the ebullition ceased, and the compound changed to a dark purple, which faded again more slowly to a watery green.

Stevenson virtually invented the stereotype of the obsessive scientist with his smoking potions and fumes of colour. This is an incredibly cinematic, visually compelling scene and has been played out countless times on stage and screen. Stevenson excelled in writing such scenes; his descriptions have been much copied but never bettered.
It must be remembered that the power of this description overwhelmed his audience – they'd never read anything like this before. Even in *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley had avoided theatrical descriptions of scientific creation.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why are Stevenson's descriptions of Jekyll’s potions so effective?

Or has the greed of curiosity too much command of you? Think before you answer, for it shall be done as you decide. As you decide, you shall be left as you were before, and neither richer nor wiser, unless the sense of service rendered to a man in mortal distress may be counted as a kind of riches of the soul.

The more florid style here is very much the style of speech of Jekyll. Stevenson regretted doing this, feeling that it was a stylistic mistake. However, one could see it as fortuitous because it makes clear that Hyde and Jekyll are not split personalities at all, but one and the same person; and that the naming of himself as Hyde enables Jekyll to play a 'con trick', not only on himself but also the reader, hiding the fact that everything that Hyde does is secretly wished for by Jekyll. Notice how Jekyll realises that Lanyon is just like him, that the 'greed of curiosity' has 'too much command' of him.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why does Stevenson make Lanyon like Jekyll? Do you think that Stevenson was wise to give Hyde these florid speech patterns which sound more like Jekyll?

'It is well,' replied my visitor. 'Lanyon, you remember your vows: what follows is under the seal of our profession. And now, you who have so long been bound to the most narrow and material views, you who have denied the virtue of transcendental medicine, you who have derided your superiors! – behold!' He put the glass to his lips, and drank at one gulp. A cry followed; he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked, there came, I thought, a change! – he seemed to swell! – his face became suddenly black and the features seemed to melt and alter! – and the next moment I had sprung to my feet and leaped back against the wall, my arm raised to shield me from that prodigy, my mind submerged in terror. 'O God!' I screamed, and 'O God!' again and again; for there before my eyes! – pale and shaken, and half fainting, and grooping before him with his hands, like a man restored from death! – there stood Henry Jekyll! What he told me in the next hour I cannot bring my mind to set on paper. I saw what I saw, I heard what I heard, and my soul sickened at it; and yet, now when that sight has faded from my eyes I ask myself if I believe it, and I cannot answer. My life is shaken to its roots; sleep has left me; the deadliest terror sits by me at all hours of the day and night; I feel that my days are numbered, and that I must die; and yet I shall die incredulous. As for the moral turpitude that man unveiled to me, even with tears of penitence, I cannot, even in memory, dwell on it without a start of horror.

Here, finally, is the revelation of Hyde's identity. His speech before he transforms into Jekyll is important. He describes his medicine as transcendental, meaning it is a kind of medicine which is superior both morally and spiritually to the 'narrow and material' medicine to which Lanyon subscribes. We begin to get a glimpse that there is a wider purpose to Jekyll's medicine than thrill-seeking. Lanyon is terrified because what he sees is his own 'moral
turpitude’: ultimately the horror for him is the horror of the revelation that he, too, would have done exactly the same as Jekyll if given the chance. The revelation means that he can’t sleep, that he dwells upon the transformation day and night. He has seen what human kind truly is – and he can’t bear the force of this knowledge.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

How does Stevenson make the transformation such an exciting and climatic moment in the novel?

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Section 5

**From Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case**

…the worst of my faults was a certain impatient gaiety of disposition, such as has made the happiness of many, but such as I found it hard to reconcile with my imperious desire to carry my head high, and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public. Hence it came about that I concealed my pleasures; and when I reached years of reflection, and began to look around me, and take stock of my progress and position in the world, I stood already committed to a profound duplicity of life. Many a man would have even blazoned such irregularities as I was guilty of; but from the high views that I had set before me I regarded and hid them with an almost morbid sense of shame.

Stevenson now starts to delve into the psychology of Jekyll by making it clear that the roots of Jekyll’s transformation into Hyde lie within his own character. Hyde speaks of having had, as a young man, a ‘certain impatient gaiety of disposition’ (in other words he was keen to seek pleasures quickly and without much thought), but this was at odds with his desire to appear like a respectable man. This led him to conceal his pleasures, thus committing him to a ‘profound duplicity of life’. Even before he became Hyde, his life was profoundly split into two: the pursuit of pleasure was associated with his secretive life, while the pursuit of respectability was associated with his public life. Stevenson reveals that Jekyll’s life is full of opposites, especially pleasure and pain. There’s the pleasure of secrecy, the pain of respectability, the pleasure of sexual gratification, the pain of repression, the pleasure of violence, and the pain of stifled anger. Jekyll was a deeply repressed man before he transformed himself into Hyde.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why does Stevenson tell us that there was a ‘profound duplicity’ to Jekyll’s life before he became Hyde?

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It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognise the thorough and primitive duality of man; I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both; and from an early date, even before the course of my scientific discoveries had begun to suggest the most naked possibility of such a miracle, I had learned to dwell with pleasure, as a beloved day-dream, on the thought of the separation of these elements.

The splitting of the two sides of man became a ‘beloved day-dream’ because Jekyll was ‘radically both’. It is interesting to note that he views the duality of man as primitive. Once again, we can see how the novel is influenced by the ideas of Darwin: it was a perception of the time that all men were essentially apes at heart, when stripped of their civilised veneers. What Jekyll doesn’t
realise is that this duality is created by a society which prizes ‘respectability’ above all else, which demands that people appear to be pious and good, which has strict moral codes that suppress desire and indeed label it as sinful.

DISCUSSION POINT
What do we learn about the society Jekyll lives in here? Why does he have such a day-dream?

There was something strange in my sensations, something indescribably new, and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul. I knew myself; at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine. I stretched out my hands exulting in the freshness of these sensations; and in the act, I was suddenly aware that I had lost my stature.

Here we come to the essence of why Jekyll wants to be Hyde. He says: ‘I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked.’ It is important to think about what he means by ‘wicked’ here: Hyde is interested only in pursuing his desires, and suppresses no emotions; the transformation ‘delighted me like wine’. Here we get the sense that there is something intoxicating and drug-like about the transformation. The master stroke for Stevenson was to make Jekyll lose his stature and become the small, wiry Hyde.

DISCUSSION POINT
What is the appeal of the transformation for Jekyll?

That night I had come to the fatal cross roads. Had I approached my discovery in a more noble spirit, had I risked the experiment while under the empire of generous or pious aspirations, all must have been otherwise, and from these agonies of death and birth I had come forth an angel instead of a fiend. The drug had no discriminating action; it was neither diabolical nor divine; it but shook the doors of the prison-house of my disposition; and, like the captives of Philippi, that which stood within ran forth. At that time my virtue slumbered; my evil, kept awake by ambition, was alert and swift to seize the occasion; and the thing that was projected was Edward Hyde.

This is a vital point. Jekyll makes it clear that he has changed into Hyde because of his innate nature, and not because the drug turns everyone into Hyde. In other words, the drug’s effects depend upon the personalities of those who take it. For Jekyll, it ‘shook the doors of the prison-house of my disposition’, suggesting that Jekyll felt that all his emotions and desires were imprisoned before the drug released them like ‘the captives of Philippi’. This is a reference to an episode in the Bible (Acts, 16:26) where God causes an earthquake at the prison in Philippi, in which Paul and Silas are held, and ‘immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone’s bands were loosed’. Paul and Silas remain behind, turning themselves in, while the rest of the criminals run free. The reference suggests that, like Paul and Silas, part of Jekyll remains in the prison house, while the rest of his desires are allowed to be ‘loosed’. Furthermore, we see how Hyde is actually a
projection of Jekyll; in other words, Hyde is Jekyll made manifest. This illustrates how the novel is very psychological in approach: it is more about the nature of Jekyll’s mind than anything else at this point.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
What do we learn about Jekyll here?

The pleasures which I made haste to seek in my disguise were, as I have said, undignified; I would scarce use a harder term. But in the hands of Edward Hyde, they soon began to turn towards the monstrous. When I would come back from these excursions, I was often plunged into a kind of wonder at my vicarious depravity. This familiar that I called out of my own soul, and sent forth alone to do his good pleasure, was a being inherently malign and villainous; his every act and thought centred on self; drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another; relentless like a man of stone. Henry Jekyll stood at times aghast before the acts of Edward Hyde; but the situation was apart from ordinary laws, and insidiously relaxed the grasp of conscience. It was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty. Jekyll was no worse; he woke again to his good qualities seemingly unimpaired; he would even make haste where it was possible, to undo the evil done by Hyde. And thus his conscience slumbered.

This is a fascinating section as much as for what is excluded as for what is included. First, consider the subject matter that Jekyll decides not to dwell upon: he does not describe in detail the sex, the beatings, the escapades that Hyde engages upon. For all his way with words, he remains inarticulate upon these matters. This is, in part, an inarticulacy of the age: the Victorians did not describe the sexual act in detail. Fascinatingly, Jekyll describes this as ‘vicarious depravity’: in other words, he believes that he is not committing these awful acts because his bodily shape has changed. But, of course, we must remember that it is Jekyll who has committed these deeds. Don’t be deceived by his self-serving words! He blames Hyde for his crimes, but, in actual fact, there is no Hyde, there is only a transformed version of Jekyll. However, the doctor is insistent that he has had nothing to do with the crimes: ‘... it was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty’. This allows Jekyll to leave his unimpeachable life at home. But there is a sense of guilt in the way Jekyll says ‘his conscience slumbered’. There is an awareness that the fiction of Hyde is a cover-up, a mask, a facade which hides the truly ugly Jekyll.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
What clues does Stevenson give us that Hyde does not really exist and that it is merely a transformed Jekyll who is present?

I was still so engaged when, in one of my more wakeful moments, my eye fell upon my hand. Now, the hand of Henry Jekyll (as you have often remarked) was professional in shape and size; it was large, firm, white and comely. But the hand which I now saw, clearly enough in the yellow light of a mid-London morning, lying half shut on the bedclothes, was lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusky pallor and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair. It was the hand of Edward Hyde. I must have stared upon it for near half a minute, sunk as I was in the mere stupidity of wonder, before terror woke.
up in my breast as sudden and startling as the crash of cymbals; and bounding from bed, I rushed to the mirror. At the sight that met my eyes, my blood was changed into something exquisitely thin and icy. Yes, I had gone to bed Henry Jekyll, I had awakened Edward Hyde. How was this to be explained? I asked myself; and then, with another bound of terror – how was it to be remedied? It was well on in the morning; the servants were up; all my drugs were in the cabinet – a long journey, down two pairs of stairs, through the anatomical theatre, from where I was then standing horror-stricken. It might indeed be possible to cover my face; but of what use was that, when I was unable to conceal the alteration of my stature?

Here we see how Hyde is beginning to take over. Jekyll has gone to sleep and woken up as Hyde, finding the ‘lean, corded knuckly’ hand of Hyde in the bed. This is a superb literary touch: this is the hand of the murderer, of the rapist, of the profligate, of the psychopath; and yet it is the mind of Jekyll who sees it. Jekyll inhabits the body of Hyde because the truth is dawning upon him: it wasn’t Hyde who committed those terrible deeds, but Jekyll. The fiction of Hyde is both being stripped away and coming to fruition. It is stripped away because Jekyll is being forced to realise that Hyde is himself. The invented character of Hyde is also coming to fruition because he is dominating; the fiction is becoming real permanently. Jekyll’s reaction is to cover his face – to hide the truth, to make it a secret.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why is Jekyll so relieved? What do you think of Stevenson’s presentation of Jekyll here?

...sweetness of relief, it came back upon my mind that the servants were already used to the coming and going of my second self. I had soon dressed, as well as I was able, in clothes of my own size: had soon passed through the house, where Bradshaw stared and drew back at seeing Mr. Hyde at such an hour and in such strange array; and ten minutes later, Dr. Jekyll had returned to his own shape, and was sitting down, with a darkened brow, to make a feint of breakfasting.

The relief that Jekyll feels is the relief of the criminal who has got away with it; the relief of the person with a secret who has managed to maintain the secret. The reader feels in a strange position: we, too, are relieved, and yet we feel that what Jekyll is doing is totally reprehensible.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why is Hyde taking over Jekyll now? What is so horrific about this invasion?

Between these two, I now felt I had to choose. My two natures had memory in common, but all other faculties were most unequally shared between them. Jekyll (who was composite) now with the most sensitive apprehensions, now with a greedy gusto, projected and shared in the pleasures and adventures of Hyde; but Hyde was indifferent to Jekyll, or but remembered him as the mountain bandit remembers the cavern in which he conceals himself from pursuit. Jekyll had more than a father’s interest; Hyde had more than a son’s indifference.

Again, one is tempted to think that Jekyll’s interpretation is a false one because it is clear that Hyde is already
predominant. It is not so much that there is a choice to be made, but that the veneer of Jekyll is being stripped away and revealing what is underneath, which is Hyde. The huge ‘iceberg’ subconscious of Hyde is now crashing into the fragile ship of Jekyll. The fact that Hyde is so much more powerful is shown by the way he is utterly indifferent to Jekyll: he only remembers him as a ‘cavern’ to hide banditry. Jekyll is a shell. There is no choice between the two.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Do you think that Jekyll genuinely has a choice to make between the good of Jekyll and the bad of Hyde, or is it more complex than that?

> I chose the better part, and was found wanting in the strength to keep it.

Here we realise that Jekyll is weak in the face of Hyde. Hyde is the predominant element in him.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
How does Stevenson create real tension here?

> For two months, however, I was true to my determination; for two months I led a life of such severity as I had never before attained to, and enjoyed the compensations of an approving conscience. But time began at last to obliterate the freshness of my alarm; the praises of conscience began to grow into a thing of course; I began to be tortured with throes and longings,

as of Hyde struggling after freedom; and at last, in an hour of moral weakness, I once again compounded and swallowed the transforming draught.

Now we have it conclusively: Jekyll wants Hyde back! He needs to free Hyde, to free his repressed emotions, to live his life properly, to be whole again. He views this as weakness, but we, reading the book from the perspective of the 21st century, see it very differently: the need for Hyde is the need to express his desires. To this extent, Jekyll is a proto-existentialist: someone who realises that to live properly one has to leave conventional Christian morality behind.

**DISCUSSION POINT**
Why does Jekyll want to be Hyde again?

> My devil had been long caged, and he came out roaring. It must have been this, I suppose, that stirred in my soul that tempest of impatience with which I listened to the civilities of my unhappy victim; I declare at least, before God, no man morally sane could have been guilty of that crime upon so pitiful a provocation; and that I struck in no more reasonable spirit than that in which a sick child may break a plaything... With a transport of glee, I mauled the unresisting body, tasting delight for every blow; and it was not till weariness had begun to succeed that I was suddenly, in the top of my delirium, struck through the heart by a cold thrill of terror. A mist dispersed; I saw my life to be forfeit; and fled from the scene of these excesses, at once glorying and trembling, my lust of evil gratified and stimulated, my love of life screwed to the topmost peg.
The way in which Stevenson presents the murder of Carew is interesting. Perhaps on initial reading we think there is some real reason for it: for example, that Carew had found out the truth about Hyde. But here it becomes clear that Hyde kills him because he has been pent up in Jekyll's mind for too long. In this sense, we realise that Jekyll's experiment has made him psychotic: by repressing his natural instincts for so long he has turned himself into a murderer. Notice how Jekyll has started to use a language which is not based upon conventional morality at all; he describes the murder as being like a sick child breaking 'a plaything'.

**Discussion Point**
Why is this description of the murder even more shocking than the original description?

The problem of my conduct was solved. Hyde was thenceforth impossible; whether I would or not, I was now confined to the better part of my existence; and, oh, how I rejoiced to think it! With what willing humility I embraced anew the restrictions of natural life! With what sincere renunciation I locked the door by which I had so often gone and come, and ground the key under my heel!

Jekyll's reaction to the murder of Carew is very disturbing. Rather feeling he needs to turn himself in as a felon, he believes that the murder solves a problem – the problem of Hyde. Hyde can no longer exist. He says his 'renunciation' is sincere: again the language is religious. He is like a monk renouncing the ungodly life. He uses the imagery of the door again, locking it so that Hyde can no longer come in.

**Discussion Point**
What do you think of Jekyll's reaction to the murder of Carew?

...but I was still cursed with my duality of purpose; and as the first edge of my penitence wore off, the lower side of me, so long indulged, so recently chained down, began to growl for license. Not that I dreamed of resuscitating Hyde; the bare idea of that would startle me to frenzy; no, it was in my own person that I was once more tempted to trifle with my conscience; and it was as an ordinary secret sinner that I at last fell before the assaults of temptation.

Of course, Hyde will not go away. Hyde is inextricably part of Jekyl. Jekyll feels Hyde, his subconscious, growling for 'license'. He wants his freedom again to express himself. It is as if Hyde is a beast, a dog on the leash that needs to be untethered.

**Discussion Point**
Why is the imagery of the 'growling' so important here? What does it tell us about Jekyll's state of mind?

I looked down; my clothes hung formlessly on my shrunken limbs; the hand that lay on my knee was cored and hairy. I was once more Edward Hyde. A moment before I had been safe of all men's respect, wealthy, beloved! – the cloth laying for me in the dining-room at home; and now I was the common quarry of mankind, hunted, houseless, a known murderer, thrall to the gallows.
The imagery here is wonderful, Shakespearean even. It recalls Macbeth’s line ‘why do you dress me/In borrowed robes?’. Macbeth, like Jekyll, is a man who appears very respectable and honourable but harbours a dark side which comes out when he murders the king. Shakespeare constantly uses the imagery of ill-fitting clothes to describe Macbeth’s position: he is a man whose own dark side does not fit the respectable clothes he wears. Stevenson uses similar imagery to describe Jekyll’s position: he is a man whose respectable clothes no longer fit.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why is the imagery Stevenson uses here so powerful?

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**Hyde in danger of his life was a creature new to me, shaken with inordinate anger, strung to the pitch of murder, lusting to inflict pain. Yet the creature was astute; mastered his fury with a great effort of the will; composed his two important letters, one to Lanyon and one to Poole and, that he might receive actual evidence of their being posted, sent them out with directions that they should be registered.**

Hyde is astute, of course, because he is Jekyll: he manages to compose letters in Jekyll’s hand because he is the very same person.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

What truth is being revealed here?

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**I received Lanyon’s condemnation partly in a dream; it was partly in a dream that I came home to my own house and got into bed. I slept after the prostration of the day, with a stringent and profound slumber which not even the nightmares that wrung me could avail to break. I awoke in the morning shaken, weakened, but refreshed. I still hated and feared the thought of the brute that slept within me, and I had not of course forgotten the appalling dangers of the day before; but I was once more at home, in my own house and close to my drugs; and gratitude for my escape shone so strong in my soul that it rivalled the brightness of hope.**

Once again, Jekyll feels he has ‘got away with it’. Safely locked within the respectable facade of his house, he is able to feel civilised again. Thus we realise that Jekyll has come to depend upon Hyde to feel ‘relieved’ again: his relief is dependent upon Hyde because without Hyde he would have nothing to feel relieved about.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why does Jekyll enter into this cycle of doing something bad in the name of Hyde and then feeling relieved?

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**The hatred of Hyde for Jekyll was of a different order. The terror of the gallows drove him continually to commit temporary suicide, and return to his subordinate station of a part instead of a person; but he loathed the necessity, he loathed the despondency into which Jekyll had now fallen, and he resented the dislike with which he was himself regarded. Hence the ape-like tricks that he would play me, scrawling in my own hand blasphemies on the pages of my books, burning the letters and destroying the portrait of my father; and indeed, had it**
not been for his fear of death, he would long ago have ruined himself in order to involve me in the ruin. But his love of life is wonderful; I go further: I, who sicken and freeze at the mere thought of him, when I recall the abjection and passion of this attachment, and when I know how he fears my power to cut him off by suicide. I find it in my heart to pity him.

Hyde is ‘apelike’ and irreverent, scrawling blasphemies on the religious books that Jekyll reads to salve his conscience. What is most important to note here is how Hyde has a ‘love of life’ and that Jekyll views this as ‘wonderful’. Hyde is ultimately someone who is very positive about life, because there are so many opportunities for enjoyment. He is what Nietzsche terms a ‘Yea-sayer’: he says yes to life and all its possibilities. Jekyll is a ‘Nay-sayer’: he is constantly saying no to things because they would not further his image of himself as a respectable and civilised man. Yet in the end, Jekyll has the ultimate sanction: of killing himself. It is the ultimate ‘no’ to all desires.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why does Hyde love life? Why does Jekyll contemplate killing himself?

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About a week has passed, and I am now finishing this statement under the influence of the last of the old powders. This, then, is the last time, short of a miracle that Henry Jekyll can think his own thoughts or see his own face (now sadly altered!) in the glass. Nor must I delay too long to bring my writing to an end; for if my narrative has hitherto escaped destruction it has been by a combination of great prudence and great good luck. Should the throes of change take me in the act of writing it, Hyde will tear it to pieces; but if some time shall have elapsed after I have laid it by, his wonderful selfishness and circumscription to the moment will probably save it once again from the action of his apelike spite.

Yet Hyde does not rip up the confession: why should he care after all?

**DISCUSSION POINT**

Why has Jekyll confessed? do you think? What are his purposes in writing the confession?

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Will Hyde die upon the scaffold? or will he find the courage to release himself at the last moment? God knows; I am careless; this is my true hour of death, and what is to follow concerns another than myself. Here, then, as I lay down the pen, and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end.

We, the reader, realise with a chill that Jekyll did win by killing himself.

**DISCUSSION POINT**

To what extent is this a chilling end to the novel?
**Conventional morality** The ordinary rules of everyday life, the code of behaviour by which ‘normal’ people abide.

**Dualistic/Dualism** The doctrine that reality consists of two basic opposing elements, often taken to be mind and matter (or mind and body), or good and evil.

**Inarticulacy** Being unable to express something in words.

**Extraneous** Irrelevant, not needed.

**Hysteric** A person who reacts in a hysterical manner to life, making a great deal of fuss about nothing!

**Irreverent** Not being respectful; disrespectful.

**Malevolence** Badness, nastiness, evil.

**Motif** A theme – a unifying idea – that is repeated or elaborated in a literary or artistic work.

**Neurotic** A person who is obsessively and needlessly worried.

**Perturbed** Upset, disturbed.

**Proto-existentialist** The forerunner of an existentialist; existentialists believed that one should do what one wants, follow one’s unconscious desires, rather than be constrained by conventional morality.

**Repressed** Held back, keeping back your emotions.

**Repression** See above.

**Resonances** Associations.

**Social position** Place in society.

**Subconscious** Another word for the ‘unconscious’.

**Unconscious** The place in the human mind where one’s repressed desires are kept.

**Undiscriminating** Not very picky, not being able to make good decisions about things and people; indiscriminate.
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